

COBB COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS MEN'S & WOMEN'S OPEN, CHURCH AND COED LEAGUES

2010 Spring/Summer League Rules and Regulations

I. GAMES

- A. **ASA** rules shall be strictly adhered to unless superseded by the following rules and regulations.
- B. Dudley (core .44) is the official league ball. The 12" Dudley will be used for the men's leagues and the 11" for the women's league. The recreation department will furnish a minimum of one new and one used ball for each game. **When required, teams may throw any .44 core ball into play.**
- C. A grace period of 10 minutes applies each weeknight to the 6:30 games only. Game time is forfeit time, except for the aforementioned game times. If a team has 8 players at game time, it must begin the game. If a team has less than 8 players at game time, it must begin the game as soon as the 8th player arrives. After the grace period, a team failing to place 8 players **on the field** will forfeit the contest. If neither team meets the minimum player requirement, both will be credited with a loss. There will be up to four games per night at 6:30, 7:30, 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. on each field. The grace period is not considered to be a part of the game time. A team may drop to as few as 8 players and continue the game.
- D. No new inning will begin after **1-hour and five minutes**, unless the game is tied. As soon as the last out of the bottom of an inning is made, the next inning officially begins. The scorekeepers or supervisors will keep the official time for each game on their respective fields. There will be a 20-run rule after 3 innings, 15-run rule after 4 innings and 10-run rule after 5 innings. The scorekeeper or supervisor shall record the starting time of each game on the score sheet. Time will begin when the home team and the umpires take the field. The game can end prior to the 5th inning if a team is ahead by 20 runs or more and 65 minutes has been played, the game will be called regardless of which team is at bat.
- E. All leagues are subject to doubleheaders.
- F. All players should wear similarly colored shirts. Uniforms should be numbered on the shirt or pants (this rule may not be used to protest the outcome of a game.). The umpires do not enforce this rule. A 2-week grace period will be in effect from opening day of the season. After that time, league coordinators may take action against teams that are non-compliant with the uniform rule.
- G. Umpires shall assure that only authorized persons sit on the team bench. It is the duty of the umpires and each manager to keep unauthorized persons off the playing field and the bench.
- H. Only the manager is authorized to address an umpire concerning a rule interpretation.

- I. In the case of rain, 5 innings will constitute an official game or 4 1/2 innings if the home team has the lead. In the case of rain with a game tied after 5 innings, the game will be resumed from the point when it was suspended. If the required number of innings has not been played, the game will be replayed from the start. Games delayed by rain for at least 30 minutes will be rescheduled if necessary based on the above criteria.
- J. In the case of light failure, equipment failure or serious injury causing a delay of at least 30 minutes, the game will be suspended and resumed at a later date from the point when it was interrupted. This will prevent succeeding games from running unreasonably late.
- K. Regulation rubber spikes, rubber-soled soccer shoes or tennis shoes are permissible footwear. No track shoes, golf shoes or football shoes may be worn. Players may not play barefoot. Steel spikes are permissible for the fast-pitch league only. As for jewelry, players are allowed to wear only medical alert bracelets taped to the body, smooth wedding bands, post-type earrings and necklaces that are not visible.
- L. The distance between bases will be 65 feet. The pitching distance will be 50 feet. A pitcher's box consisting of an area from the front of the pitcher's plate and extending back six feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate shall be used. The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or within the pitcher's box. Pitching with one or both feet on the line is considered legal. This box allows the pitcher to release the ball from 50 feet to 56 feet from home plate.
- M. Teams can bat as many players as are in attendance at game time, with any 10 playing on defense at any one time. If additional players show up after the game has started, they can be added to the bottom of the line-up. If a team chooses to bat all its players, then an out will be charged if a player is injured or chooses to leave the game for another reason and no substitute is available. If a team chooses not to bat all its players, then the extra hitter rule will be in effect. Teams can have 11 hitters and can play any 10 of them on defense at any time (with the exception of Coed where they may have 12 hitters in accordance with Rule II-C). When making substitutes, the batting order must always remain the same.
- N. Any starter or substitute may be re-entered once. Players must occupy the same batting position whenever they are in the line-up.
- O. Lineups should be submitted to the scorekeeper 10 minutes prior to scheduled game time. A proper lineup consists of first and last names, and numbers. The supervisor on duty, not the umpires, is responsible for enforcing this rule. The supervisor can forfeit a game if a team deliberately withholds its lineup. The game clock will begin at the appropriate time whether a lineup has been submitted or not. If a team starts a game with 9 or more players and falls below that number at any time, it will be credited with an "out" each time a vacant slot comes to bat. A team that falls below 8 players will forfeit the game. **Any player listed on the line-up that is not available to bat for their turn in the line-up will be credited with an out.** If a team starts with less than 10 players, late-arriving players must be added at the end of the lineup.
- P. An appeal play can be made during any dead ball by any player on the field. All appeals can be made by addressing the umpire and explaining the appeal. All appeals **must** be made before the next live ball.

- Q. To prevent injury and protect the defensive player who attempts to make a play on a base runner, the base runner will be called "out" if he remains on his feet and, in the umpire's judgment, crashes with great force into the defensive player who is holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag. If the act is judged to be flagrant, the offender will be ejected. A runner may slide into a defensive player. Contact between a base runner and a defensive player does not necessarily result in the base runner being called "out."
- R. The homerun limit in the Major division is 4, 2 homeruns in the Competitive, and 0 homeruns in the Recreation division. All homeruns in excess of the limit will result in an out with the exception of the Recreation division, which will be an inning-ending out. For this rule, a homerun is an untouched fair ball hit over the fence.
- S. Teams will not run out home runs.
- T. 3 balls will result in a walk and 2 strikes will result in a strikeout. One foul on the 2nd strike is allowed. **The at bat starts with a 0 ball, 0 strike count.**
- U. The pitching arc is **6 feet to 10 feet from the ground.**
- V. League rules prohibit players or coaches who are bleeding from further participation until the bleeding has been stopped. All teams are required to maintain a first-aid kit that contains supplies to stop, contain or cover bleeding. The umpires' judgment will be final as to whether further participation will be allowed.
- W. Safety bases will be used at all parks. See ASA rulebook for detailed information.
- X. In the event of a tied game after 7 innings or after game time has expired; extra innings will be played as a 1-pitch format. In coed play, if a man is walked the next female must bat regardless of the number of outs.
- Y. Any bat that is on the ASA non-approved bat list (web site: asasoftball.com) is not approved for any Cobb County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department-sponsored league. A batter that enters the batters box with a non-approved bat will be called out. A batter that is found to have used a non-approved bat after his /her at-bat has been completed will be called out and all runners must return to their previous bases. If the same batter is caught using a non-approved bat for a second time in the same season, he/she will be ejected from the game. If it occurs a third time, the batter will be suspended from all Cobb County recreational softball programs for a minimum of one calendar year. A batter entering the batter's box or using an altered bat will be ejected immediately and suspended for a period of time to be determined by the league coordinator (minimum of one calendar year).
- Z. If a batted ball hits a pitcher directly from the bat, the batter will be called out by the home plate umpire. A dead ball will be declared and all runners must return to their previously occupied bases. This policy does not affect batted balls that first hit the ground before striking the pitcher, batted balls that deflect off the pitcher's glove to the pitcher's body, or batted balls that hit a pitcher's arm or leg as he/she reaches away from his/her body to stop a line drive. No determination as to the legality of the bat will be made unless necessary due to serious injury or obvious alterations to the bat.

- AA. **DESIGNATED RUNNER/COURTESY RUNNER** – Prior to each game, a team will be allowed to designate one non-starter as a designated runner/courtesy runner. The player must be designated before the game to the scorekeeper and the home plate umpire. The runner can only be used once per half inning and cannot be in the batting order as either a position player or a designated hitter. The designated runner/courtesy runner can be used as a regular substitute during the game; however, the team will lose its designated runner/courtesy runner for the remainder of the game. **NOTE:** In coed play, both a male and a female designated runner/courtesy runner may be used once per half inning. Males must be designated for male players and females must be designated for female players.

II. SPECIAL COED RULES

- A. To play the game, a team must have a minimum of 4 women and 4 men on defense at all times. At no time can more men than women play on defense. If a woman is forced to leave the game, for any reason, an automatic out will be scored each time her position in the batting order comes to bat. All male players will continue to bat.
- B. When a team is playing defense, there must be a man/woman combination in the pitching and catching positions at all times, regardless of the number of players (men or women) participating. Two women must play infield positions, and two women must play in the outfield. If a team plays with eight players, it must have at least one woman at an infield position and one woman in the outfield.
- C. Men and women must alternate in the batting order, unless more women than men are playing. In that case, women may bat back-to-back. In no case can men bat back-to-back. Men are not considered to have batted back-to-back when an automatic out is taken between their at-bats.
- D. If a male batter is walked, he is automatically awarded second base. The next female batter will bat. Exception: with 2 outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat. In extra innings, all batters must bat.
- E. Before the game begins either or both teams may elect not to hit the 11" ball. If neither team hits the 11" ball, the 12" ball will be used the entire game.
- F. If a team starts with less than 10 players, late arrivals must be added according to Rule II-C. If a team bats all players, Rule I-M will apply.
- G. When a woman is at bat the outfielders must play at normal depth. In most parks a 200' line is established and all outfielders must remain behind that line until the batter swings at the ball. If an outfielder is caught in front of the line prior to the swing, the umpire will call a "delayed dead ball" and the batter will have the choice of accepting the results of the at bat or batting again.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

1. **MEN'S OPEN, WOMEN'S OPEN AND COED:** A player must be 16 years old to be eligible.
2. **CHURCH:** Each team's roster must be comprised of individuals who are active members or minister-approved regular attendees of the church or a church organization they represent. A player must be 16 years old to be eligible.

B. When eligibility is in doubt, the burden of proof rests with the team whose player is in question.

1. A case of a player participating under an assumed name **MUST** be handled on the spot. The opposing manager must bring this to the attention of the supervisor on duty before the last out of the game. The player under question must produce a picture I.D. or his/her team will forfeit the game, and the player could be suspended for the remainder of the season.

EXCEPTION: The supervisor on duty may accept a non-photo I.D. if, in his/her judgment, extenuating circumstances exist.

2. In other cases where eligibility is in doubt (EXAMPLE: A player not on a team's roster or on two teams in the same league), the protest must be submitted in writing to the league coordinator by 5 p.m. the next working day. A \$50 protest fee (CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY) must accompany the report. If not reported by the deadline, the game will be considered official and cannot be contested.

Recreation department staff will decide all cases of player eligibility. Teams found to have played an ineligible player(s) will forfeit the game, and the ineligible player can be suspended for the remainder of the season (from ALL Cobb Recreation Department leagues).

C. Players may participate on **1 team per league**. If a player's eligibility is protested and he is found to be on more than one roster in the same league, the protested game will be forfeited. The player in question must then declare which roster he/she will officially remain on for the remainder of the season. A special supplement deals with teams and players that registered as church teams but could not get into the proper leagues. The field supervisor has the authority to stop an ineligible player from participating. At no time can a player play more than one class below the highest class participated in (male or female). If a player is confirmed to have played in a lower class game, the player will be suspended for 2 games and the next game for the HIGHER class team will be declared a forfeit.

D. ***A men's open or church league team is allowed to have one female player on its roster at all times. When at bat, these rostered females must hit the 12-inch ball. Men can not play on women's teams.***

IV. PLAYING ROSTER

- A. Team rosters must be submitted to the league coordinator before the start of the season. A team that fails to submit a roster automatically will have its games forfeited if an opponent protests the eligibility of its players.
- B. A team can carry up to 25 players on its roster at one time.
- C. For a player to change teams either (1) the manager of the player's original team must report to the league coordinator and verbally release the player or (2) the player may report to the league coordinator and request his/her release. If a player requests a release to play for another team, he/she must be added to the roster of his/her new team. Teams will not be allowed to add an illegal/ineligible player to their rosters.
- D. All roster additions must be made prior to game time of each team's **second** game of the second half. The player/s must be present to be added to the team roster at the field prior to game time. After the above deadline, rosters will not be accepted and no additions will be allowed to rosters on file without written permission from all managers in the league (a maximum of 4 players can be added). At no time will players be added after a game begins.
- E. Under no circumstances will players released from a team in any league be allowed to play with the same team again that season. **NOTE:** A player may change teams only once during the season.

V. PROTESTS

- A. A manager can protest an umpire's interpretation of the rules, provided the protest is made prior to the next official pitch. The protesting manager must make the supervisor aware of the protest. The protesting manager must file a written report with the league coordinator by 5 p.m. the next working day, along with the \$50 protest fee. (Check or money order only)
- B. Upon receiving the written protest and protest fee, the league coordinator will determine the validity of the protest. If, in his/her judgment, the protest is valid due to a misinterpretation of the rules, he/she will call a meeting of the staff protest committee and address the protest. If the protest is upheld, the protest fee will be refunded.

VI. PLAYER CONDUCT

- A. **Abusive language, behavior, or, profanity directed toward county representatives, players, umpires or spectators will not be allowed by players or spectators who are on the bench, on the field or in the park. Offenders may be ejected before or after a game has been concluded and are subject to removal from the park, playing area and league.**
- B. Smoking is not allowed by anyone on the field or in the dugout.

- D. If a player or coach touches an umpire or county representative in anger or threatens to do bodily harm before, during or after a game, he will be barred from the league indefinitely. Cobb Recreation Department staff will determine the length of the suspension. (MINIMUM SUSPENSION IS FOR 1 CALENDAR YEAR IN ALL CCPRCAD ADULT ATHLETIC PROGRAMS.)
- E. Any player or coach ejected from a game will serve a two game suspension (minimum) in **all leagues he/she participates in**. A player ejected for the second time from any game during a season will be suspended for the remainder of that season. If a player or coach participates in a game while ineligible due to suspension, the game shall be declared a forfeit and the player or coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season. **NOTE: Scorekeepers are not required to notify said player prior to the start of the game concerning ejections. Failure to do so shall not affect a player's ejection for the season**
- H. Fighting among players, coaches and spectators, or any other conduct judged inappropriate by recreation department staff may result in ejection of the individuals or teams involved. If suspension is warranted, recreation department staff will determine the length of the suspension. **(MINIMUM SUSPENSION IS 2 ADDITIONAL GAMES)**

VII. THE SEASON

- A. In most cases, the season will feature a complete double round-robin schedule. The season will be divided into two halves. (Partially filled leagues will play schedules to be determined by the league coordinator.) At the end of the season, the first-half winner will play the second-half winner for the league championship (single-game playoff). The winning team will receive the championship trophy and t-shirts, and the losing team will receive the runner-up trophy. If a team wins both halves, there will be no playoff. That team will receive the championship trophy and t-shirts, and the team with the second-best overall record will win the runner-up trophy.

NOTE: A team entering the league in the second half will not be eligible for second-best overall record consideration. Rule VIII-A may not apply to partially filled leagues.
- B. If a team forfeits more than two games during the season, the Cobb Recreation Department reserves the right to drop that team from the league with no entry fee refund.
- C. At the completion of each half, if feasible, the league coordinator will place the league winners into the next-higher division at the same park. The last-place team in a division will be dropped to the next-lower division. Teams will only be moved within their respective parks.
- D. **AFTER THE SCHEDULE IS COMPLETE, THERE WILL BE NO CHANGES. SCHEDULES WILL BE GIVEN OUT AT THE MANAGERS' MEETING.**
- E. Rainout games and playoff games may be scheduled based on available days (including Saturdays), not according to the specific days of the week on which participating teams may have played. All playoff games will be scheduled as soon as possible after the regular season ends.

- F. A team is required to throw in a ball at any time if, in the judgment of the umpire, the game balls are in an unplayable condition or no acceptable balls remain for play to continue. The balls entered will be used for the remainder of the game. A ball may not be entered during a count unless there are no balls remaining in the possession of the umpire. The ball entered must be a COR .44 or less.
- G. If a team cannot field enough players by game time to begin, the park supervisor or complex supervisor will determine if the game is a forfeit.
- I. **Championship Playoff Games:** A coin toss prior to the game shall determine HOME/VISITOR assignments. The time limit shall be waived; however all other league rules apply. In championship games, player eligibility protests must be made prior to the last out. All players will be required to show a picture I.D. to the scorekeeper/supervisor prior to championship games.

VIII. PARK RULES

- A. Drinking of alcoholic beverages will not be tolerated. A player determined to be under the influence of intoxicants will be immediately removed from the playing area and suspended from the Cobb Recreation Department softball program for 1 year. Cobb County law prohibits possession of alcohol in the county parks system, including parking lots.
- B. Unattended or unleashed dogs are not allowed in the parks. Dogs are not allowed on athletic fields.
- C. "Pepper drills" (hitting balls against the fence) are strictly prohibited on all playing fields.

IX. RAIN-OUT PROCEDURE

The rainout procedure states that no games will be officially rained out until **3 p.m.** It is the responsibility of each manager to call the appropriate rainout number after 3 p.m. If feasible, the coordinator will have the reschedule date on the recording. If no decision has been made by 4:30 p.m., the field supervisor will make the decision at 6 p.m. at the field. (No staff members are at the fields between 4:30 and 6 p.m., except at the Al Bishop Complex.)

RAINOUT NUMBERS

Al Bishop Complex	770-528-8809
Bells Ferry & Terrell Mill	770-528-8855
Nickajack	770-528-8822
Kennworth, Lost Mountain & Sweetwater	770-528-8854

X. TIE-BREAKER

The following procedures will be used to determine the first-place finisher at the end of each half or to break ties for other places.

TWO-WAY TIE: If two teams are tied with identical records, the winner is the team that won the game when the two teams played in that half. If the teams split their games for that half, the team with the highest average run differential for that half will be declared the winner. If the teams remain tied after determining run differential, the team allowing the fewest runs will be declared the winner.

THREE-WAY OR MORE TIE: If three teams or more are tied, the winner will be determined by the most positive run differential average per game for that half, unless one team has defeated all the others during the half.

EXAMPLE

Team "A" wins:	18	17	9	23	14
	12	11	3	18	13
	<hr/>				
	+6	+6	+6	+5	+1
Team "A" losses:	2	10			
	9	15			
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	-2	-5			
	24				
	-7				
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	17			Total run differential	

17 runs divided by 7 = +2.833 AVERAGE RUNS PER GAME
(this calculation used when a team has a forfeit score)

If two of the teams still have the same average runs per game differential for that half, the winner will be the team that won the game played between the two teams during that half. If the teams split their games during that half, the team that gave up the fewest runs will win.

If the same team wins both halves of league play, the team with the next-best overall record will be awarded second place. A team moving from a lower classification at the half will not be eligible for the best overall record in the higher classification.

Forfeit games will be added into the run differential calculation as a 7-0 score, except when a disadvantage would occur to a winning team or an advantage would occur to a losing team.